

Name _____

Date _____ Hour _____

English 10: AoW #9 - 2014

Directions: Mark the article to demonstrate close, active reading. Record your thoughts as you read by noting comments, questions, areas of confusion, connections, etc.

Source:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kat-cohen/the-truth-about-outside-r_b_5997698.html

The Truth About Outside Reading: Why It's Important and What to Read

by Kat Cohen

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Educators have always stressed the importance of reading for pleasure outside of class, but how does this benefit students preparing for the college admissions process?

Preparing for college doesn't mean just building a balanced college list, taking standardized tests and completing college applications senior year. It's never too early to start thinking about college, and one of the best ways to start the college prep process is to read! Not just about the admissions process in general, but works of fiction and nonfiction, publications and blogs.

For some students, outside reading may seem less important than the other obligations vying for their time and attention. However, outside reading is crucial during the college prep process and should be encouraged early on.

Here's why it's really important for students to read outside of class:

It helps develop interests.

As I've said many times before, colleges aren't looking for the mythical "well-rounded student." Instead, colleges want to build well-rounded classes made up of specialists -- or students with a defined interest that they've honed and intend to pursue in college.

Becoming a specialist means identifying and exploring a particular passion or interest, and one of the best ways to do this is through reading.

For example, a student interested in economics or finance can read books, blogs and niche publications to better understand the field and its core concepts. This knowledge can then be used in extracurricular activities, such as functioning as the treasurer for the entrepreneur club or organizing a fundraiser for another student organization.

It helps colleges get to know you.

Colleges like Columbia University and Stanford University have sections on their Common Application supplement that ask students to list what they've been reading outside of class. Princeton University and University of Southern California also have "short take" questions on their supplements that ask students to indicate their favorite book and author. Colleges want to get to know students and their interests, and looking at their outside reading is one way to do it.

Not only does outside reading provide insight into your personality, it can also give you material for a compelling college essay. For example, in Harvard's Common Application supplement, students are given the opportunity to write an essay from a selection of topics, including "an intellectual experience (course, project, book, discussion, paper, poetry or research topic in engineering, mathematics, science or other modes of inquiry) that has meant the most to you."

It will enhance your vocabulary...

The more words you're exposed to, the better chance that they will eventually make their way into your own internal word bank. Studies have shown that the more students read, the better their vocabularies, which can come in handy when preparing for standardized tests. Not only does reading provide the vocabulary, but also the context to derive its meaning -- which is a key component of critical reading passages on the SAT and ACT. By reading challenging material, you're practicing for standardized tests without even knowing it!

...and help make you a better writer.

Want to write a standout college application essay? Read more. Studies have shown that those who read a variety of well-written works are more likely to excel in writing achievement. Coupled with enhanced vocabulary, writing styles and devices, including cadence, word usage, sentence construction and more, can essentially rub off on readers.

While reading is a great tool to teach writing, critically thinking about what you're reading can also help improve your writing. It's important not just to read, but analyze the selection itself including its meaning, themes and ultimate message.

It's relaxing.

Apart from the obvious academic benefits that can help you improve your chances of getting into your dream college, reading is also a great way to decompress and de-stress. Even just reading for a short amount of time can reduce stress levels by up to 68%. This is important for students struggling with the balance among school, extracurricular activities and standardized test prep.

Here are some books that students should consider adding to their outside reading lists, depending on their interests.

Art and Art History

- History of Art by Anthony F. Janson and H.W. Janson
- Great Artists: The Lives of 50 Painters Explored Through Their Work by Robert Cumming

English and Literature

- A Moveable Feast by Ernest Hemingway
- The Invisible Man by H.G. Wells

Business

- The Teen's Guide to Personal Finance by Joshua Holmberg and David Bruzzese
- Becoming Financially Literate: The Basics You Never Learned in High School by Eric J. Weiss

Technology

- The Innovator's Dilemma by Clayton Christensen
- The Chip: How Two Americans Invented the Microchip and Launched a Revolution by T.R. Reid

Author's Purpose:

Intended Audience:

Author's Point of View on the Subject: